

From: CD <dirksman888@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2025 7:08 PM

To: List - City Council <CityCouncil@manhattanbeach.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support Small Businesses - don't give citations!

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Manhattan Beach City Council,

I am writing as a concerned resident to respectfully ask for your continued support of our small businesses, particularly those in downtown Manhattan Beach.

Recently, I have become aware of citations being issued to shops for having simple benches outside their businesses, for using A-frame signs and for placing water bowls out for dogs. I strongly disagree with these actions. Benches provide a welcoming place for visitors and patrons to rest, and dog water bowls are a small but thoughtful gesture that reflects the friendly, community-oriented spirit of our city. These features are neither harmful nor disruptive; rather, they enhance the experience of being in downtown Manhattan Beach.

Manhattan Beach draws visitors from all over because of its locally owned businesses and unique charm. That charm is found in the small details—the welcoming storefronts, the ability to sit and enjoy the area, and the thoughtful accommodations that make people feel comfortable and included. Removing or penalizing these elements feels unnecessary and counterproductive to the vibrant atmosphere we are known for.

I respectfully ask the Council to reconsider the enforcement of these regulations and to work with small business owners in a way that supports them rather than discourages them. Please help preserve the character and charm that make Manhattan Beach special.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A concerned resident of Manhattan Beach

Sent from Conor's iPhone

310.344.8167

From: Liz Stromath <lizstromath@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2025 11:42 PM
To: List - City Council <CityCouncil@manhattanbeach.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Very disappointed in the city council

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Council,

I just learned that you are not allowing benches, dog bowls or a frame signs for our small businesses in our city. I would like to know why? What's wrong with the charm? Why on earth are these things a problem and god forbid a thirsty dog gets a drink of water????!!!!

Thanks in advance for a response.

Liz Stromath

Concerned Resident

From: Orla Dirks <orla.dirks@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2025 7:38 PM
To: List - City Council <CityCouncil@manhattanbeach.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concern About Restrictions on Small Businesses in Downtown Manhattan Beach

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

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I respectfully ask the Council to reconsider the enforcement of these regulations and to work with small business owners in a way that supports them rather than discourages them. Please help preserve the character and charm that make Manhattan Beach special.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Orla Dirks

A concerned resident of Manhattan Beach

From: Patrick Whitfield <pawhky@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2025 11:42 AM
To: City Clerk <cityclerk@manhattanbeach.gov>; Patrick Whitfield <pawhky@yahoo.com>; List - City Council <CityCouncil@manhattanbeach.gov>
Cc: Talyn Mirzakhanian <tmirzakhanian@manhattanbeach.gov>; Masa Alkire, AICP <malkire@manhattanbeach.gov>; Rachel Johnson <rjohnson@manhattanbeach.gov>; Libby Bretthauer <lbretthauer@manhattanbeach.gov>; Jesse Alexander <jalexander@manhattanbeach.gov>; Erik Zandvliet <ezandvliet@manhattanbeach.gov>; Kelly Stroman <kelly@downtownmanhattanbeach.com>; Jay Harkenrider <sharkjay@aol.com>; Jessica Sorrentino <jharkie7@gmail.com>; Trendy Eyes Optometry <trendysmb@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Modification request to Municipal Code 7.36.030

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

PAW Optometry

223 Manhattan Beach Blvd.

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

310.545.4090

12/15/2025

Manhattan Beach City Council Members and City Clerk

City of Manhattan Beach

1400 Highland Avenue

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Re: Modification to Municipal Code 7.36.030, Case Number CODE-25-02531

Dear Mayor David Lesser, Mayor Pro Tem Joe Franklin, and Councilmembers Nina Trieu Tarnay, Steve S. Charelian and Amy Thomas Howorth:

I have run Trendy Eyes Optometry for almost 15 years, starting in May, 2011. I am requesting that city council consider modifications to Municipal Code 7.36.030 to permit appropriately placed benches along the public right-of-way. Currently, 7.36.030 mentions encroachment use for things such as private improvements, long-term commercial use, dining, etc. However, when I spoke with someone from the enforcement department, they were unable to find a permit application to address benches.

My business is on the steep part of Manhattan Beach Blvd, just West of Starbucks. There had been a white Polywood bench in front of the store for about 10 years (see picture below). Two other nearby businesses also had similar style benches for pedestrians. All these benches were actively used.



Permitting benches on Downtown Manhattan Beach's public rights-of-way is encouraged primarily for improved safety, promoting public health and social interaction, enhancing the streetscape, and providing essential resting spots for pedestrians, particularly the elderly.

Enhancing Public Safety, Space and Pedestrian Experience

- Public Safety:** The benches reduce crowding on sidewalks as people aren't stopping abruptly in the middle of the walk way because there's nowhere to sit. Benches create natural supervision areas to pause and observe, lessening the strain on traffic flow.
- Rest and Comfort:** The benches provide essential places for people to rest, especially as they tire from walking up from the beach, making the public space more inclusive and accessible. They provide a safe spot to regroup, or take a break - increasing dwelling time and comfort and convenience.

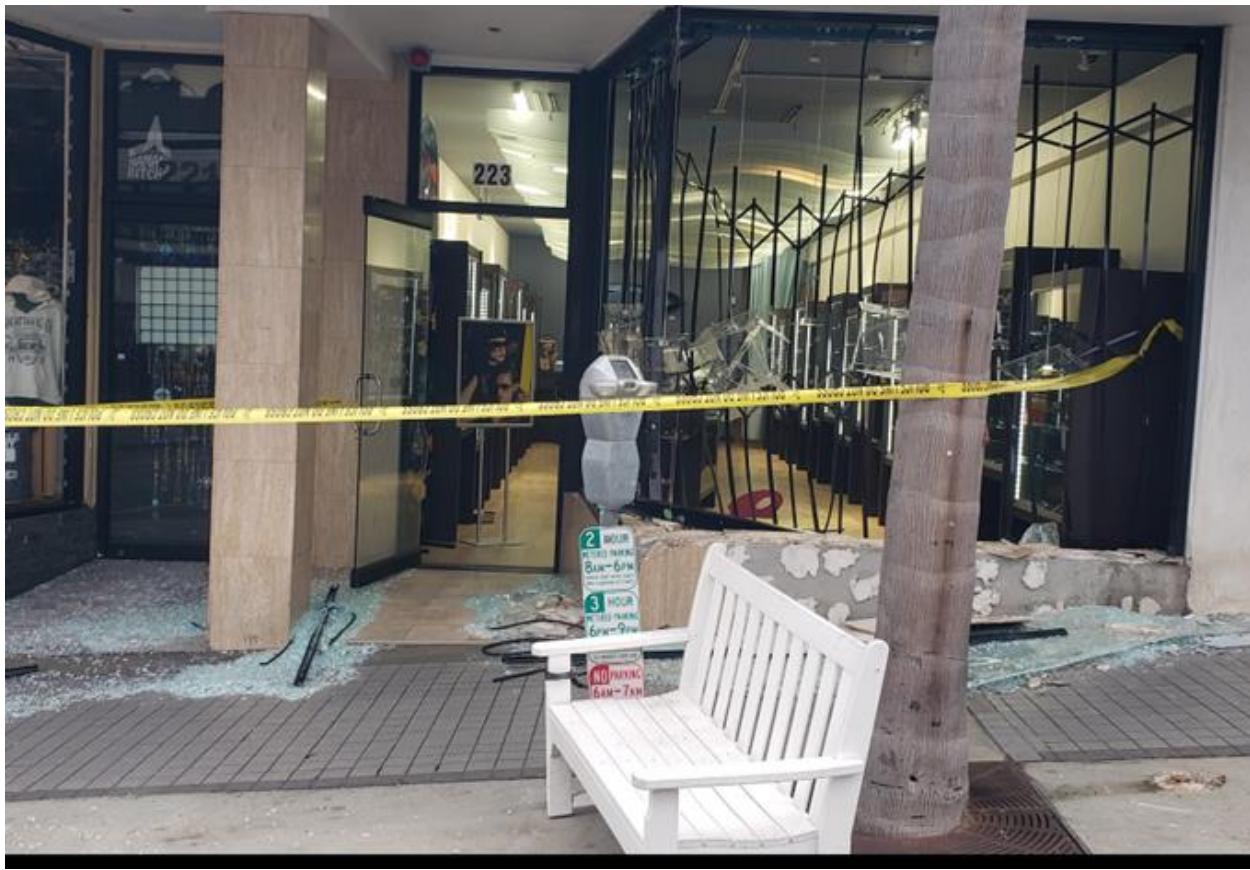
- **Social Interaction:** The benches encourage people to linger, socialize, and people-watch, which activates Manhattan Beach Boulevard and contributes to a vibrant sense of the Downtown space.
- **Improved Walkability:** These benches support sidewalk traffic by offering resting points along the steep route, out of the way, making walking a more enjoyable mode to visit Downtown.
- **Aesthetic Appeal:** These benches enhance the visual character, streetscape design and amenities of the street, contributing positively to the Downtown environment and visual character of the area.

Supporting Commerce and Community

- **Business Support:** These benches encourage visitors to stay in the area longer, increasing economic activity. Users are often seen enjoying ice crème, drinking coffee and reading.
- **Community Building:** The benches creating inviting public spaces which foster social interaction and community building, and contributes to the overall Downtown experience and well-being. Benches are an invitation to stay a little longer and not to pass through quickly

Considerations for Placement

- The benches are positioned between parking meters and trees and do not impede the right-of-way for travel. Pathways are clear and not obstructed.
- The benches are spaced to maintain a minimum clear space for pedestrian and parking traffic and avoid interference with any critical utilities, fire hydrants, or traffic signs.
- The benches are properly maintained by the related retail establishment to keep the area safe and clean.
- All costs of acquisition and maintenance are covered by the related retail providers – no cost to the city.
- The benches do not create safety hazards. In fact, they facilitate safety by providing a visible barrier to vehicles parking.
- The benches do not need a uniform look. Given the eclectic look of Downtown, individual benches provide more visual interest.
- The specific concrete benches in front of my business provide a disincentive for vehicular smash and grabs. Specifically, when my business suffered the first smash and grab attempt with a stolen SUV being driven into my front window (April 2025), the thieves simply moved the white bench.



In addition to the loss and the extraordinary amount of time to rebuild, my insurance company refused to renew my policy, causing my insurance rates to double. Understand, once the thieves had gained access, they were in and out of the store in 80 seconds. It is not realistic to think any police force would be able to react in time to prevent the initial smash, let alone the grab. So, when considering methods to dissuade a future vehicular attack, the idea of replacing the plastic benches with extremely high quality and very heavy concrete (900 pounds each) benches was born. As you can see, the benches are attractive, functional, out of the way and popular.





In summary, well-placed benches don't obstruct—they organize. They are more than furniture—they're an investment in the heart and soul of Downtown Manhattan Beach. They make the district more inclusive, more economically resilient, more welcoming, and more aligned with the community's values.

Allowing benches supports small businesses, enhances the visitor experience, and reinforces Downtown's identity as a vibrant, walkable, human-centered Main Street. In a community that prides itself on connection, health, coastal charm, and supporting local businesses, benches don't just fit - they belong.

Sincerely,

Patrick Whitfield

PAW Optometry

714.501.7577

pawhky@yahoo.com

From: umut cicek <waivesmanhattan@gmail.com>

Date: January 22, 2026 at 10:16:42 AM PST

To: David Lesser <dlesser@manhattanbeach.gov>, Joe Franklin

<jfranklin@manhattanbeach.gov>, Nina Tarnay <ntarnay@manhattanbeach.gov>, "Steve

S. Charelian" <sscharelian@manhattanbeach.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] outdoor display for retail shops

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Manhattan beach city officials,

i own 2 retail shops downtown Manhattan beach.small businesses are dying because of the unfriendly city officials that make everything difficult for small businesses. Please allow us to display 1 or 2 racks outside in order to survive and pay our rent. It helps to cover some of our expenses. like every city, allow small businesses to display products outside. Why specifically the city of Manhattan beach giving us a very hard time?

Why do some restaurants put tables outside and we can not put anything outside. It is not fair.

Please take action to help small businesses. Otherwise there will be more shops closing down very soon and this city will be a ghost town like Santa monica.

This is a really serious matter. time to show us your support.

i 'm sending this email after I talked to at least over 10 business owners .

they all complaining same issues.. we want to see small business friendly city,

I'm looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you.

Umut Cicek

Heavenly couture

Bella beach.